

Letting

Go...

of WRONG SPEECH

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

– Ephesians 4:29

“You’ll never amount to anything. You’re a failure. You’re disgusting. I hate you!” These are examples of death words. Words are powerful and have the potential to be destructive. Our tongues can create so many problems... Gossip can destroy many people and will quickly tear apart relationships. Complaining and nagging become habits and have the power to transform a GREAT day into a negative MESS with disastrous results.

Looking at our key verse this week, Ephesians 4:29, we need to evaluate whether our words are building up or tearing down... they ARE doing one or the other!

Destructive Words: critical, blaming, accusing, swearing, argumentative, sarcastic... Words are powerful things. What do the following verses have to say about the power of words?

Proverbs 14:1 _____

Proverbs 10:19 _____

Proverbs 13:3 _____

Proverbs 21:23 _____

Luke 6:45 _____

Proverbs 12:18 _____

1 Peter 3:9 _____

Gossip: Idle talk or rumor, especially about the personal or private affairs of others... It damages your character, your ministry, and others!

What do the following verses have to say about gossip?

Proverbs 11:12-13 _____

2 Timothy 2:16 _____

Proverbs 16:28 _____

Ways to avoid gossip:

- Avoid friends who gossip
- Watch out for the prayer request thing...
- Leave the room or Speak up "I'm just not comfortable with this conversation"
- Be ready to change the subject...

Complaining: "I'm hungry, I'm tired, it's too hot, it's too cold, I don't feel good..." Complaining is not considered a good form of speech. It's negative and becomes exhausting to be around. God's word says it is a disobedient behavior!

What do you learn about complaining in the following verses?

Philippians 2:14 _____

Psalms 106:25 _____

1 Corinthians 10:10 _____

Swearing: “Oh my...” The second commandment in Exodus 20:7 deals with a habit that is definitely in the “wrong speech” category. What is it? _____

Also! Be careful when making a vow—don’t make them nonchalantly!!! It is very serious business. What does Matthew 5:33-34 and James 5:12 say about oaths, and vows? _____

Crude Talk: Sarcasm, inappropriate jokes, lying, what is the warning in Ephesians 5:3-4?

What picture is used to describe someone who deceives their neighbor in Proverbs 26:18-19?

What does Psalm 34:13 instruct us to do? _____

Right Words: To counter all of the wrong speech we have to fill our mouths with wholesome talk. What do the following verses in Proverbs say about CHOOSING words wisely?

Proverbs 15:1 _____

Proverbs 10:21 _____

Proverbs 12:25 _____

Proverbs 16:21 _____

Proverbs 17:27-28 _____

James 1:19 _____

James is packed full of interesting illustrations of the tongue and how powerful it is. As you look at James 3:3-12 list everything you find that is relevant to the tongue? _____

Wrap up:

I must let go of _____ and use my _____
to speak _____ and _____.

Passage Index (NIV 1984 unless otherwise stated)

Proverbs 14:1 *"The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down."*

Proverbs 10:19 *"When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise."*

Proverbs 13:3 *"He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin."*

Proverbs 21:23 *"He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity."*

Luke 6:45 *"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."*

Proverbs 12:18 *"Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."*

1 Peter 3:9 *"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing."*

Proverbs 11:12-13 *"A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his tongue. ¹³A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret."*

2 Timothy 2:16 *"Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly."*

Proverbs 16:28 *"A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends."*

Philippians 2:14 *"Do everything without complaining or arguing. "*

Psalms 106:25 *"They grumbled in their tents and did not obey the LORD."*

1 Corinthians 10:10 *"Do not grumble, as some of them did--and were killed by the destroying angel."*

Exodus 20:7 *"You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name."*

Matthew 5:33-34 *"Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.' ³⁴But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne..."*

James 5:12 *"Above all, my brothers, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your 'Yes' be yes, and your 'No,' no, or you will be condemned."*

Ephesians 5:3-4 *"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving."*

Proverbs 26:18-19 *“Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows ¹⁹is a man who deceives his neighbor and says, ‘I was only joking!’”*

Psalms 34:13 *“keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies.”*

Proverbs 15:1 *“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

Proverbs 10:21 *“The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of judgment.”*

Proverbs 12:25 *“An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.”*

Proverbs 16:21 *“The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction.”*

Proverbs 17:27-28 *“A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered. ²⁸Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.”*

James 1:19 *“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry...”*

James 3:3-12 *“When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, ⁸but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. ¹¹Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹²My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.”*